

COGENT
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)
Document provided by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG)

Question: If I have questions related to Cogent/GAPS (Georgia Applicant Processing System), where can I find them?

If you have questions about Cogent, please go to their website at www.ga.cogentid.com.

Question: How do I register in Cogent/GAPS?

You may register by following the procedures below.

DHS procedures for using GAPS

The Georgia Bureau of Investigation has awarded Cogent Systems the contract to provide electronic fingerprint submission services to applicants in the State of Georgia. The Department of Human Services contractors may utilize the new services by enrolling with Cogent Systems for the Georgia Applicant Processing Services (GAPS) for applicants that DHS provides the fitness determination.

The following are guidelines for the contractors to follow in order to use the Georgia Applicant Processing Services (GAPS)*.

Enrollment Process

All Georgia Agencies interested in using the GAPS service for applicant background checks must enroll online at www.ga.cogentid.com or over the phone at 1-888-439-2512. Monday thru Friday, 8AM to 6PM EST, prior to using GAPS.

Enrollment is completed in two steps.

**PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT BOTH STEPS MUST BE COMPLETED AND
CANNOT BE SKIPPED**

- **Step 1** - The agency must complete the GBI agreement. This agreement can be found by clicking the Agency Enrollment link. The agency must complete the form which is the last page of the agreement and **mail** it to GBI at the address shown. The agency must have an ORI or OAC number which should be entered in the ORI/OAC field on the form. **If your agency does not have an ORI or OAC, leave the field blank. When GBI receives the form an ORI or OAC will be affixed to the form and the form will be returned to the agency. The agency must wait until the form is returned by GBI with an ORI or OAC number before going to the next step.** If your agency already has an ORI or OAC you may continue to the next step after mailing the completed form to GBI.

- **Step 2** - The agency must complete the GAPS on-line enrollment form which is Step 2 on the Agency Enrollment screen. Once you complete the information on the on-line screen, click 'Save'. You must PRINT the form that is displayed and then have your agency head to SIGN the form. The original form with the signature must be sent to Cogent Systems at the Dublin Ohio address shown on Step 2 on the Agency Enrollment screen. For expedited enrollment you may fax a copy to Cogent Systems at 614-718-9694, but the original signed copy must be mailed to Cogent Systems within seven (7) days.
- **Step 3** – You should receive an email confirmation from Cogent Systems within 10 business days. The email confirmation will have any necessary Usernames and Passwords based on what your agency selected for enrollment type during the registration **You can not continue to the next step until you receive the email confirmation from Cogent Systems.**
- **Step 4** – Once you receive email confirmation from Cogent Systems your enrollment process is completed. You can now begin to register applicants by clicking on Single Registration or Multiple Registration which is found on the main GAPS website page. **(DHS is requiring that all contractors register the applicants rather than the applicants registering themselves).**

All of the fields on the registration screen that have a **red (*)** must be completed. Near the end of the registration screen you will see '**Transaction Information**'. You must click on the drop box next to **Reason** and select the appropriate reason for the applicant to be fingerprinted (refer to **DHS Reasons Fingerprinted** below for guidance). **An example of this portion of the screen can be found on page 4.**

- You must click on the drop box next to **Payment** and select the appropriate payment option. If the applicant is paying, select credit card or money order. If your agency is paying and you enrolled as Agency Pay Only or Agency Pay and View Results, you should select Agency from the drop box. A field for Agency Code and Agency Password will appear if this option is selected. You should enter the Agency Code and Agency Password provided by Cogent Systems in the email confirmation (Ex: [R081PT0908](#), [Password— P081PT0908](#))
- You must enter your ORI or OAC in the field **ORI/OAC**. You should enter your agency's Verification Code in the **Verification field**. This code can also be found in the email confirmation.
- You must click the box '**Does another agency make the fitness determination?**' '**Choose Agency**' will appear, click the drop box, then select **DHS**. In the box next to "**If yes, enter determining agency's ORI**, you should enter **GA920280Z**.

- You should click **Next** at the bottom of the page, on the next screen, if all of the information that displays is correct, click **Next**. At the end of the registration a **Registration ID** number will be given. The **Registration ID** number should be given to the applicant to provide to the operator at the nearest GAPS Print Location.
- **NOTE:** Some of you may have been using **GA920290Z** on the hard copy cards; DHS is requiring everyone to use the **GA920280Z** when using GAPS.

DHS Makes the Fitness Determination for Your Agency

NOTE: The search results should be available to DHS to retrieve from the GAPS website within 48 hours after the applicant is fingerprinted at the GAPS Print Location. This process does not mandate the amount of time it will take for DHS to send your agency a determination clearance letter. You may contact DHS to verify the results have been received. You must still submit your Office of Residential Child Care (ORCC) **notarized record check applications** to DHS before a determination clearance letter is sent to your agency. If you do not receive the determination clearance letter within seven (7) business days you must contact DHS at 404-463-7801 or 404-463-1884.

DHS Office of Inspector General
Attn: Background Investigations Unit
Two Peachtree Street, NW, Suite 30.466
Atlanta, GA 30303-3142

DHS REASONS FINGERPRINTED GUIDELINES:

- **DHS Office of Residential Child Care (ORCC) Licensed Facilities/Directors/Employees** should be selected if the applicant is being fingerprinted to obtain a license through **Office of Residential Child Care (ORCC)** for Residential Child Care, and Outdoor Child Caring Programs (OCCP or formerly OTP) **O.C.G.A. 49-5-64**

Example of bottom portion of registration screen:

Transaction Information

*****DHS-Licensing Child Care Center/Directors/Employees**

Reason * DHS-Licensing Child Care Center/Directors/Employees

Payment Agency *

ORI/OAC GAP12345 *

Verification Code P123456 (case sensitive) *

Agency Code R081PT9099

(Mandatory if
Payment is Agency)

Agency Password
(Mandatory if
Payment is Agency)

**Does another
agency make the
fitness
determination?**

☒

Choose Agency : DHS

If yes, enter
determining
agency's ORI :

 *

Note: Highlighted fields are required and marked by a *.

Next

Reset

***Georgia Applicants and Agencies that use Gaps are responsible for registering properly prior to fingerprinting. Errors in fingerprint results due to improper registration are the responsibility of the users.**

Question: What if my prints have been rejected?

If your fingerprints have been rejected, you have 90 calendar days to be reprinted. Immediately return to a Cogent Gaps print site and inform the technician that your prints were rejected and request they be redone. **If it has been more than 90 calendar days**, you must **re-register and re-pay**.

If your prints have been rejected for a second time, immediately contact the Office of Inspector General (OIG) at 404-463-7801.

Question: How do I check my registration status in Cogent?

Go to www.ga.cogentid.com

- Scroll to "Registration" tab
- Go to "Background Check Status"
- Complete applicable fields
- Click on "Find" and the registration status will appear on the screen

Question: When should I call to check on my final clearance letter?

Cogent indicates their processing time is 48 hours. However, once the Office of Inspector's office (OIG) office receives your Cogent results, additional time is needed to

review your criminal history and to issue a final clearance letter. If you haven't received your final clearance within 15 calendar days, you should contact the OIG at 404-463-7801.

CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK APPLICATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

Question: How do I begin the process of getting a criminal record check clearance?

To begin the process, please obtain a criminal record check application from your agency and complete the application in its entirety. Be advised that your application **MUST** be notarized. Once complete mail or fax application to OIG at:

DHS Office of Inspector General
Attn: Background Investigations Unit
Two Peachtree Street, NW, Suite 30.466
Atlanta, GA 30303-3142

Or

Fax to: 404 463 0873

Question: What is a Satisfactory Determination?

A satisfactory determination means there was no criminal record found that would preclude you from employment.

Question: I have a satisfactory final clearance, but I have since changed agencies that I am employed with. Can I get a new letter under the new agencies name?

No. You must be re-printed under the new agencies name.

Question: What is a Final Disposition?

A final disposition denotes the courts final arrangement or settlement of the case.

Question: I received a disposition letter from the OIG, how long do I have to respond?

You have thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the letter.

Failure to respond within the allotted time will result in your application being closed and you will need to get re-printed, re-pay and reapply.

Question: How do I obtain a final disposition?

To receive a final disposition, contact or go to the court in which the charges were heard by the Judge. See the Court Clerk to request a Certified Final Disposition.

The Disposition **MUST** include each crime and the letter **MUST** have the Court's Certified Seal.

Question: What is a local record expungement?

O.C.G.A. 35-3-37(d)(1) allows for the expungement of arrest charges by a local law enforcement agency when certain conditions are met. If approved by the local arresting agency, and the appropriate prosecutor, the arrest cycle is sealed on the Georgia criminal history report by Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC). Access to that arrest information is restricted to criminal justice agencies only. The arrest is expunged in its entirety from the FBI criminal history record.

The following are examples of final court dispositions that *may* qualify: Dismissed; Not Presented to Grand Jury; No Further Action Anticipated; Nolle Prossed/Prosequi; Dead Docket; or No Record on File. All applications must be approved or denied by the appropriate prosecutor.

To apply for the local record expungement, contact the arresting law enforcement agency to obtain an application for Local Record expungement.

The Request for expungement form is a three (3) part form:

Section One - You will complete Section One and return to the arresting agency.

Section Two – Completed by the arresting agency who forwards the request to the appropriate prosecutor (District Attorney or Solicitor).

Section Three – Completed by the prosecutor who will approve or deny the request.

All three sections must be completed and forwarded to GCIC by the prosecutor.

Question: If I receive an unsatisfactory criminal record determination, can I appeal the decision?

Yes. You can request an administrative hearing. The request must be made in writing ten (10) days of your receipt of the notice letter stating your record is unsatisfactory. The written request should be mailed or faxed to:

Attn: Legal Unit
Office of Residential Child Care
Department of Human Services
2 Peachtree Street, NW, Suite 32.458

Atlanta, Georgia 30303-3167
404-657-9637 (Fax)

Question: Who do I contact if I have questions about the administrative hearing process?

You may contact the Legal Unit at 404-657-5707.

CRIMES

Question: What are the covered Crimes?

The covered crimes are as follows:

TITLE 49. SOCIAL SERVICES
CHAPTER 2. RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE LICENSING
ARTICLE 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

O.C.G.A. § 49-2-14.1 (2009)

§ 49-2-14.1. Definitions; records check requirement for licensing certain facilities

(a) As used in this Code section, the term:

(1) "Conviction" means a finding or verdict of guilty or a plea of guilty regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought.

(2) "Crime" means commission of the following offenses:

(A) A violation of Code Section 16-5-1, relating to murder and felony murder;

(B) A violation of Code Section 16-5-21, relating to aggravated assault;

(C) A violation of Code Section 16-5-24, relating to aggravated battery;

(D) A violation of Code Section 16-5-70, relating to cruelty to children;

(E) A violation of Code Section 16-5-100, relating to cruelty to a person 65 years of age or older;

(F) A violation of Code Section 16-6-1, relating to rape;

(G) A violation of Code Section 16-6-2, relating to aggravated sodomy;

(H) A violation of Code Section 16-6-4, relating to child molestation;

(I) A violation of Code Section 16-6-5, relating to enticing a child for indecent purposes;

(J) A violation of Code Section 16-6-5.1, relating to sexual assault against persons in custody, detained persons, or patients in hospitals or other institutions;

(K) A violation of Code Section 16-6-22.2, relating to aggravated sexual battery;

(L) A violation of Code Section 16-8-41, relating to armed robbery;

(M) A violation of Code Section 30-5-8, relating to abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a disabled adult or elder person; or

(N) Any other offense committed in another jurisdiction that, if committed in this state, would be deemed to be a crime listed in this paragraph without regard to its designation elsewhere.

(3) "Criminal record" means any of the following:

(A) Conviction of a crime;

(B) Arrest, charge, and sentencing for a crime where:

(i) A plea of nolo contendere was entered to the charge;

(ii) First offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted; or

(iii) Adjudication or sentence was otherwise withheld or not entered on the charge;
or

(C) Arrest and being charged for a crime if the charge is pending, unless the time for prosecuting such crime has expired pursuant to Chapter 3 of Title 17.

Question: How can I obtain a copy of my record from a state other than Georgia?

Contact the state's criminal justice agency (Bureau of Investigation, State Police, etc.) within that particular state to obtain information on requirements and fees.

Question: How can I obtain a copy of my Georgia or National Criminal Record?

Individuals can obtain a copy of their national criminal history record from the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) by submitting a request to the address below. In order to receive a copy of your FBI record for personal, employment, or international work requirements, the FBI requires the following: 1) A signed written request with a brief explanation for the request and complete mailing address; 2) A current set of 10 rolled

fingerprints and 4 flat impressions provided by a law enforcement agency which includes your name, date of birth, and place of birth; 3) An \$18 fee in U.S. currency by certified check or money order payable to the United States Treasury. This information is provided in compliance with the U.S. Freedom of Information Act.

FBI
CJIS Division
ATTN: SCU, MOD.D-2
1000 Custer Hollow Road
Clarksburg, West Virginia 26303
304 625-3878

For questions or information regarding a Georgia Criminal Record, you can contact:

Georgia Crime Information Center
CCH/Identification Services
P.O. Box 370748
Decatur, Georgia 30037-0748
404 244 2639

***If your question has not been answered, please contact one of our representatives at
404 463 7801.**